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Bush to Return to U.S., Prepare for CIA Hearings

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PEKING—George Bush, head of the U.S. liaison office in Peking, will leave China immediately after President Ford's visit here and return to the United States to prepare for his confirmation hearings as director of the CIA.

The former Republican congressman, chairman of the Republican National Committee, and U.N. ambassador, was nominated by Ford last month to replace William E. Colby.

Bush told reporters here Monday that he planned to make "very clear" his feelings about his future in politics at his confirmation hearings.

His nomination already has become a controversial one because of his extensive political background, but more particularly because Ford refused recently to remove Bush as a vice presidential possibility in 1976.

A reporter asked Bush Monday whether he was prepared to disavow any vice presidential aspirations.

He replied, laughing: "That was a nice try. I was waiting for somebody to ask that. I will discuss it with the committee. I will make my feelings very clear."

Bush was the first person to greet Ford on his arrival in Peking, speaking briefly with the President aboard Air Force One before he came down the steps to meet Chinese leaders.

Bush said he had been happy in his role as U.S. representative in Peking, although somewhat frustrated by a lack of contact with Chinese officials. He has been in Peking since 1973, and has never met Premier Chou En-lai, he said.

There has been only one mention in the Chinese press announcing Bush's nomination to the CIA post. But, Bush said, surprisingly most Chinese people he meets seem to know he is leaving.

No successor has been announced, and no word is expected during Ford's visit to Peking.